To: CN=Steven Neugeboren/OU=DC/O=USEPA/C=US@EPA[]

Cc: []

Bcc: CN=Peter Ornstein/OU=R8/O=USEPA/C=US[]
From: CN=Mary Grady/OU=DC/O=USEPA/C=US

Sent: Thur 6/7/2012 1:50:26 PM

Subject: Water Law News for June 7, 2012

House Passes Energy-Water BillWith Environmental Policy Riders

Gulf Coast Energy, Fishing IndustriesShould Start to Adapt Now, Report Says

North Carolina Senate Passes LegislationTo Set Up Hydraulic Fracturing Framework Republicans Package Seven Bills to PushDevelopment of Domestic Energy Resources

EPA, Perth Amboy Reach AgreementTo Curb Combined Sewer Overflows

Pebble Mine Supporters Challenge AuthorityOf EPA to Assess Impacts on Area Watershed

States, Regions Lead Ocean Policy Efforts; Report Calls Program Funding Insufficient

House Republicans Keeping 'Open Mind'On Environmental Provisions in Transport Bill

As Governor, Romney Sought to ReconcilePro-Business Policies in Liberal State

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Waxman Doubts Prospects For Coal Ash Deal In Highway Bill Conference

EPA Eyes Infrastructure Funding Solutions In Light Of Falling Revenues

Democrats Defend EPA Enforcement

Supreme Court Weighs SDWA Suit

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(embedded image)

WATER LAW NEWS JUNE 7, 2012

HIGHLIGHTS

Budget

House Passes Energy-Water Bill

With Environmental Policy Riders

The House approved June 6 a \$32.1 billion energy and water spending bill that would cut clean energy funding for the Department of Energy and block the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from implementing Clean Water Act guidance on which waters fall...

Climate Change

Gulf Coast Energy, Fishing Industries

Should Start to Adapt Now, Report Says

HOUSTON—The Gulf Coast region's energy and fishing industries, local governments, and residents should take steps now to adapt to potential hazards associated with climate change, including more intense hurricanes due to higher...

Drilling

North Carolina Senate Passes Legislation

To Set Up Hydraulic Fracturing Framework

RALEIGH, N.C.—Hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking, would be authorized in North Carolina under legislation approved by the state Senate June 6....

Energy

Republicans Package Seven Bills to Push

Development of Domestic Energy Resources

Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.), the House majority whip, introduced legislation June 6 packaging seven bills to expand energy production and lower regulatory hurdles for that production....

Enforcement

EPA, Perth Amboy Reach Agreement

To Curb Combined Sewer Overflows

A New Jersey city in a settlement with the Environmental Protection Agency has agreed to make \$5.4 million in repairs to upgrade and expand its combined sewer system to prevent wastewater, sewage, and stormwater from overflowing into the Raritan...

Mining

Pebble Mine Supporters Challenge Authority

Of EPA to Assess Impacts on Area Watershed

ANCHORAGE, Alaska—Supporters of the proposed Pebble Mine in Alaska challenged the Environmental Protection Agency's decision to conduct a watershed assessment at a public meeting on the issue, contending the assessment is...

Oceans

States, Regions Lead Ocean Policy Efforts;

Report Calls Program Funding Insufficient

States and regions have stepped up to the plate in implementing a national ocean policy, but ocean programs are underfunded and the Senate has failed to show leadership in ratifying an international ocean treaty, according to a report released...

Transportation

House Republicans Keeping 'Open Mind'

On Environmental Provisions in Transport Bill

House conferees said June 6 they were reviewing a Senate transportation proposal with open minds, even as they insisted on the importance of including provisions on the Keystone XL pipeline, project streamlining, and coal ash in the final...

SPECIAL REPORT

Election 2012

As Governor, Romney Sought to Reconcile

Pro-Business Policies in Liberal State

BOSTON—During the four years he was governor of Massachusetts, Mitt Romney's environmental policies evolved to the point where advocates who initially embraced him as a defender of the environment concluded that he had retreated...

Inside EPA Weekly Report, 6/8/12

http://insideepa.com/Inside-EPA/Inside-EPA-06/08/2012/menu-id-67.html

Waxman Doubts Prospects For Coal Ash Deal In Highway Bill Conference

Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA) is downplaying prospects that lawmakers will reach a compromise deal to limit EPA oversight of coal ash as part of a pending highway spending bill, though industry officials and environmentalists are ramping up their competing lobbying efforts on the issue.

EPA Eyes Infrastructure Funding Solutions In Light Of Falling Revenues

EPA is investigating how drinking water and wastewater utilties can make up for falling revenues to fund needed infrastructure repairs and replacements costing billions of dollars, noting that policies encouraging water conservation have led to significant and continuing drops in water use and could result in an overhaul of the water pricing structure.

Latest Blogs

Democrats Defend EPA Enforcement

Democratic lawmakers are defending EPA's enforcement record under the Obama administration as even-keeled and comparable to that of past administrations, in an attempt to show . . .

Supreme Court Weighs SDWA Suit

The Supreme Court is scheduled to decide June 7 whether to hear an Idaho man's appeal of a criminal conviction under the Safe Drinking Water .

AIR POLLUTION:

Great Lakes mercury emission comes from few power plants -- report

Jeremy P. Jacobs, E&E reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 6, 2012

More than half of all mercury emissions in the Great Lakes region comes from 25 coal-fired power plants in states bordering the lakes, according to a new report from the Natural Resources Defense Council.

The NRDC survey found that mercury pollution from the Great Lakes region accounts for nearly 25 percent of the national total and targeted Ohio, Indiana and Pennsylvania as the highest emitters in the area.

"Airborne mercury from coal-fired power plants in the Great Lakes Region harms our health, and the benefits of reducing mercury emissions are well worth the cost," said Cindy Copeland, the report's author.

Mercury is a potent neurotoxin that bioaccumulates in the food chain. Roughly a fifth of mercury emissions from Great Lakes power plants ends up in local soil, rivers and lakes, where it leads to contamination of fish.

The report notes that the 144 power plants in eight states bordering the Great Lakes emitted more than 13,000 pounds of mercury in 2010 and that the lakes' basin is considered a "net sink" for collecting mercury.

Ohio, Pennsylvania and Indiana are the largest emitters, the report says, because mercury emissions aren't regulated in Ohio and Indiana, and Pennsylvania's attempts at regulation have been overturned in court.

"Mercury is poisoning the Great Lakes, and the three states -- Ohio, Indiana and Pennsylvania -- that impose no rules are by far the worst offenders." Copeland said.

Ohio accounts for 21 percent of the total emissions in the Great Lakes region, and just 12 plants in Ohio and Indiana -- owned wholly or in part by American Electric Power -- account for 19 percent of the region's mercury emissions.

The most-emitting power plant in the region is Shawville in Clearfield County, Pa., followed by Monroe in Monroe County, Mich.; Homer City in Indiana County, Pa.; and Cardinal in Jefferson County, Ohio.

NRDC said the report emphasizes the need for U.S. EPA's recently issued standards for mercury and other air toxics for power plants. The report notes that EPA's projections estimate the health benefits of the standards once implemented in 2015 will be worth \$37 billion to \$90 billion.

The rule, however, is opposed by industry and congressional Republicans, in part because they say those benefits are calculated based on reductions in fine particles, or soot, emissions, not mercury and other air toxics.

Industry and more than 20 state attorneys general have signed onto a lawsuit challenging the rule, and Oklahoma Sen. James Inhofe, the top Republican on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, plans to bring to a vote in the next two weeks legislation that would veto the standards. Because it was filed under the Congressional Review Act, Inhofe's legislation needs only a simple majority to pass (E&E Daily, June 5).

It is "critical ... that every single U.S. senator from the region stand up for the Lakes by rejecting reckless attempts to derail the long overdue Clean Air Act updates that can help tame this problem," said Thomas Cmar, an NRDC attorney.

Scientists have long argued that Michigan wildlife and residents are particularly susceptible to mercury contamination. A large, partially federally funded study released in October found that levels of mercury contamination in the Great Lakes are on the decline but that the extent of the contamination is larger than originally believed (Greenwire, Oct. 11, 2011).

WATER POLLUTION:

N.J. city, Obama admin reach \$5.4M settlement on sewer overflows

Paul Quinlan, E&E reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 6, 2012

The city of Perth Amboy, N.J., agreed to make \$5.4 million in repairs, upgrades and expansions to its sewer system to stop overflows in a settlement with federal regulators announced today.

The work will reduce the amount of untreated sewage and other pollution being discharged into the Raritan River and Arthur Kill. At issue are sewers that mix domestic sewage and industrial wastewater and overflow in heavy rains. Those overflows have become a significant source of water pollution as cities have grown without adequately expanding or maintaining their sewer systems.

Perth Amboy's system discharges almost 370 million gallons into the Raritan River and Arthur Kill each year, federal regulators estimate. Across New Jersey, 30 combined sewer systems discharge 23 billion gallons of sewage and other pollutants each year into all of New Jersey's major water bodies.

Under the agreement, the city will pay a \$17,000 penalty and conduct annual inspections of all its combined sewer system control facilities. It will also develop and implement a combined sewer overflow pollution prevention plan.

The deal is the latest in a long series of settlements resulting from a two-decades-plus crackdown by U.S. EPA and the Department of Justice on sewage and stormwater pollution under the Clean Water Act.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors last week asked the Obama administration to halt the enforcement campaign, citing the financial pressures they face in a down economy. Proponents of the effort say cities are trying to shift the blame for decades of chronic underinvestment in their aging sewers (E&ENews PM, May 31). COAL:

21 strip-mining foes arrested in Hill protests

Manuel Quinones, E&E reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 6, 2012

U.S. Capitol Police arrested 21 activists today who protested mountaintop-removal coal mining at congressional offices.

Police said the demonstrators were charged with unlawful entry.

Staging sit-ins at the offices of Reps. John Duncan (R-Tenn.), Hal Rogers (R-Ky.), Morgan Griffith (R-Va.) and Nick Rahall (D-W.Va.), protesters sang "We Shall Overcome" as police led them away in plastic handcuffs.

An activist taped Rahall's meeting with demonstrators who denounced mountaintop removal -- the dynamiting of rock and soil to expose coal seams -- in strong terms.

"Mountaintop removal is unnecessary," someone tells Rahall in the tape. "When I watch a mountain being blown up, I feel like I'm being raped."

"I'm at a loss here," Rahall says. He questions why the protesters want U.S. EPA to have expanded power over West Virginia waterways if they also criticize the agency for failing to do enough to protect resources from mining.

He adds. "I refuse to paint the pessimistic picture of our state that you all do."

The meeting ended in discord. "As a constituent who lives in Rahall's district," West Virginia resident Dan Taylor said in an interview, "I felt he was very dismissive of what people had to say."

The sit-ins are part of a week of action against Appalachian strip mining. Pro-coal groups were also planning events this week in Virginia and Kentucky (Greenwire, June 1).

Both the coal industry and environmental groups were hoping to attract supporters to a string of public hearings this week in Appalachia on stalled coal mining permits.

"The denial of these 36 permits is just another step by the EPA to stifle the coal industry in Kentucky," Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) wrote in formal comments to EPA. "In objecting to these permits, the EPA has trampled on the rights of the state to oversee its permitting."

EPA has said it wants to make sure the permits include enough environmental safeguards.

"We are committed to working through these permit issues with the companies and the state," Gwen Keyes Fleming, EPA's Southeast regional administrator, said in a statement. "After considering all the information presented both orally and in writing during the hearings, we will decide whether to affirm, modify or withdraw each of the objections to these permits."

PUBLIC LANDS:

Sportsmen's groups urge media blitz to keep Gulf conservation money in transportation bill

Phil Taylor, E&E reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 6, 2012

Sportsmen's groups today urged support for a provision in the Senate transportation bill that would send billions of dollars in BP PLC oil spill money to Gulf Coast restoration and guarantee a sizable increase in acquisition of new public lands.

In a conference call today, conservationists and a major fishing manufacturer urged outdoor publications to cover the "RESTORE Act," an amendment that passed the Senate on a 76-22 bipartisan vote. It would send 80 percent of potentially tens of billions of dollars in Clean Water Act fines to Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas to pay for economic and environmental restoration projects (E&ENews PM, March 8).

The amendment also included language to roughly double funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) over the next two years, a provision that has riled some fiscal conservatives but recently garnered the support of 32 House Republicans. "We believe sportsmen across the country either are watching the conferencing of this bill or should be," said Jim Martin, conservation director for the Berkley Conservation Institute, which is part of the tackle manufacturer Pure Fishing Inc. "Speaking to media representatives is a very important part of getting the word out."

Martin, who was joined on a conference call today by Paul Schmidt of Ducks Unlimited and Chris Macaluso of the Louisiana Wildlife Federation, said the Gulf region provides some of the best freshwater and saltwater fishing in the world, in addition to wetlands for duck hunting and habitat for turkeys, deer and bears.

"The good news is, sportsmen care," he said. "The bad news is, often, sportsmen don't understand until after the decisions have slid by us."

Schmidt said that although about \$20 billion in LWCF receipts has been diverted to other purposes over the program's 48-year history, it has helped purchase lands in a handful of national wildlife refuges in Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida and Texas.

"Our supporters, almost 1 million at DU, are pretty charged up on this issue," Schmidt said. "I know many of them on their own are reaching out to their representatives, including conferees."

The bicameral conference has until the end of the month to agree on markedly different transportation bills, raising fears that lawmakers will pass a short-term extension punting the issue beyond the November elections.

While the RESTORE Act concept enjoys wide bipartisan support and a version of it was included in the House transportation bill,

funding for land acquisition may have a steeper political climb.

House Natural Resources Chairman Doc Hastings (Wash.), who is one of 20 House Republicans on the conference, last month said the LWCF funding was "particularly egregious" at a time of fiscal belt tightening.

In addition, he said the amendment unnecessarily extends LWCF through 2022, while the Senate bill itself only extends transportation funding for two years.

"The mandatory buying of more land under LWCF is a fiscal dereliction of duty -- especially since the government can't afford to maintain the lands it already owns," Hastings said in an opening statement at a conference meeting. "The maintenance backlog on America's federal lands registers in the multiple billions of dollars. Congress should be addressing this backlog, not adding to it."

But the measure late last month picked up support from more than 30 House Republicans, including Rep. Mike Simpson (Idaho), the chamber's chairman in charge of funding land management agencies.

In a letter to House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio), the lawmakers called the LWCF amendment "a continuing investment in the economic driver that our federal, state and local public lands represent."

Noting the wide bipartisan support in the Senate, the lawmakers said the amendment would directly address several of the sportsmen's most pressing conservation, access and funding problems.

LOUISIANA:

Bill would earmark Gulf spill money for coastal restoration

Published: Wednesday, June 6, 2012

The Louisiana Legislature this week approved a proposal that would earmark fines and penalty money collected from the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill for coastal protection.

The measure by state Rep. Simone Champagne (R) would send the money -- potentially totaling billions of dollars -- that the state receives for violations of federal pollution standards resulting from the 2010 Deepwater Horizon spill to the state's coastal protection fund. The fund is used for restoration projects along the coast as well as hurricane protection efforts.

The bill now heads to Gov. Bobby Jindal (R) for final approval (AP/Fuel Fix, June 6). -- JE

INVASIVE SPECIES:

Ark. man charged with selling live Asian carp

Published: Wednesday, June 6, 2012

Michigan authorities have charged an Arkansas man with 12 counts of selling live Asian carp in violation of a state law aimed at preventing the spread of the invasive species.

David Shane Costner of Harrisburg, Ark., sold two grass carp to undercover investigators with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources last month, the state attorney general's office said today. Officials said Costner was transporting illegal carp along with legal fish species around Michigan in a tractor-trailer and selling them in store parking lots.

Grass carp are one of several carp species that have spread through U.S. waterways. The two varieties considered the biggest threat to the Great Lakes are silver and bighead carp (John Flesher, AP/Cleveland Plain Dealer, June 5). -- AS COAL ASH:

Government data prove safety of waste -- industry report

Manuel Quinones, E&E reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 6, 2012

Waste produced from burning coal and other fossil fuels for power is often no more dangerous than soil, according to a new report from the coal industry that relies on government data.

The American Coal Ash Association released its findings today as lawmakers discuss legislation to prevent U.S. EPA from designating coal ash as hazardous and to give states broad oversight.

The report, authored by AECOM Technology Corp. toxicologist Lisa Bradley, found that concentrations of metals in coal ash were, with few exceptions, were below environmental screening levels.

"Anti-coal environmental activists consistently refer to coal ash as 'highly toxic' and 'hazardous to your health,' with no regard for how those unsupported descriptions damage the environmentally beneficial recycling of the material," Coal Ash Association Executive Director Thomas Adams said in a news conference this morning.

The report describes Bradley as having a Ph.D. in toxicology from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She is also a member of the Coal Ash Association's executive committee.

She crunched recent U.S. Geological Survey data on coal ash -- including only fly ash and bottom ash -- from power plants in Alaska, Indiana, New Mexico, Ohio and Wyoming. The report found that metal concentrations were similar to those found in common dirt.

"This analysis estimates exposure to children who live on top of a coal ash pile 24 hours a day," Bradley said in a statement. "Even under these unrealistic conditions, the metals contained in coal ash do not rise to a level that warrants more than a screening-level evaluation using U.S. EPA established guidelines."

The association's goal is to promote coal ash recycling for things like fertilizer or road construction. Leaders say the report substantiates previous regulatory determinations against a hazardous designation. Adams said his group has always agreed with tougher disposal guidelines -- but not under a hazardous label.

He cited a study by the American Road and Transportation Builders Association that said coal ash use would help the government save more than \$100 billion over 20 years in road construction costs because of reduced costs and higher durability. But boosters say the regulatory stigma is already turning potential users away from the material (Greenwire, Dec. 13, 2011).

Bradley and Adams accuse environmentalists of using shoddy science to vilify coal ash. But Earthjustice attorney Lisa Evans, who is pressing for tough EPA rules, said industry-backed reports like the one released today are misleading.

Her group, using data compiled by EPA and the Environmental Integrity Project, counts at least 197 cases of contamination and spills caused by coal ash in 37 states (E&ENews PM, May 30).

"Despite the real-world threat from coal ash to our drinking water and rivers and streams, the American Coal Ash Association newest report totally ignores any risk to human health or the environment from the poisoning of water," Evans said in a statement. "There is no question coal ash contains dangerous chemicals," she added, "and it is shameful that the industry's lobbyists are distorting the facts in order to avoid the inevitable need to clean up their mess and protect our drinking and surface water supplies."

Debate has intensified surrounding the issue, with boosters wanting to include a House-passed proposal in broad transportation legislation.

While some Democrats support Congress' blocking EPA intervention, others have joined environmental groups in asking Congress and the courts to give EPA the regulatory space it needs to enact new standards for ash dumps. The opponents say the pending legislative measures are not strong enough to protect public health.

"Coal ash threatens the health of Americans in your state," wrote more than 100 groups in a letter to the transportation bill conference committee members.

"In 13 of the 14 states represented on the conference committee, state regulations fail to require essential safeguards at coal-ash ponds such as groundwater monitoring to detect leaks and composite liners to protect drinking water sources," the letter says. Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) agrees: "It doesn't belong in that bill. It should be considered separately," he said during an event this morning in Washington, D.C., hosted by National Journal. "I don't see any compromise on that issue, and I don't think it should be in that bill."

But Adams said, "When it comes to transportation, this is a vital tool."

Reporters Jeremy Jacobs and Jason Plautz contributed.

ΟΚΊ ΔΗΟΜΑ:

State sets new water conservation guidelines

Published: Wednesday, June 6, 2012

A new Oklahoma law seeks to have the state develop communities, generate electricity and drill for energy without compromising its water resources.

The Water for 2060 Act aims to keep water consumption down by setting a goal that would limit the state's water consumption in 2060 to current levels. But the law is completely voluntary.

"By setting an ambitious water-conservation goal and expanding the use of other nonpotable supplies, H.R. 3055 will ensure we protect our freshwater while helping cities, businesses, industries and agriculture producers find the water resources they need to grow and expand," Gov. Mary Fallin (R) said in a statement (Felicity Barringer, New York Times, June 5). -- JE SUPERFUND:

Cleaned-up site in Texas still poses risks

Published: Wednesday, June 6, 2012

The historical marker in front of the MOTCO Superfund site near Galveston, Texas, declares that the 1960s-era petrochemical waste site was cleaned up in 1997, but polluted water is still being pumped from under the site, and an underground pollution plume has migrated off the property toward a water well.

The site, where toxic waste from nearby refineries was disposed of in seven unlined pits during the 1960s, was declared the most hazardous Superfund site in Texas by U.S. EPA in 1982. After more than a decade of cleanup, the historical marker went up saying "remediation complete," even though a pollution plume remains underground. A 1984 EPA investigation found small amounts of contamination in what it called a "potential drinking water aquifer" directly below the site.

The latest EPA report said the plume has now migrated 300 feet off the property in the direction of a water well used by the Galveston County Municipal Utility District No. 12 a quarter-mile away.

District engineer John Mercer said the well is used only during times of peak demand during the summer and holidays. He also noted that the water is pumped from 800 feet below ground, while the plume is at 100 feet.

"We tested for everything and found nothing," Mercer said.

In its latest report on the site, EPA said the underground pollution migration and the potential for human exposure are "under control" but needed more monitoring (Dave Fehling, State Impact/NPR, June 5). -- AS HAWAII:

Farmers, environmentalists debate pesticide rules

Published: Wednesday, June 6, 2012

Hawaii's health officials are setting new rules for pesticides to comply with a federal court ruling that requires the chemicals to be regulated under the Clean Water Act.

State officials met this week to hear public comment on the draft rules. The hearing mostly reflected the interests of two opposing

groups: the farming interests that want to ease the strictness of the rules and the environmental groups that want to make them more stringent.

Environmentalists warn the pesticides could allow dangerous chemicals -- including one that causes cancer -- into water sources. But farming groups, which say more restrictions would be "an inordinate burden," say many of these chemicals are already regulated under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (Sophie Cocke, Honolulu Civil Beat, June 4). -- JE

ClimateWire -- Thu., June 7, 2012 -- Read the full edition

1. SCIENCE: Researchers see the Earth nearing a 'tipping point' to rapid environmental changes

Human activities are pushing Earth toward a "tipping point" that could cause sudden, irreversible changes in relatively stable conditions that have allowed civilization to flourish, a new study warns. There are signs that a toxic brew of climate change, habitat loss and population growth is dramatically reshaping life on Earth, an international team of researchers reported yesterday in the journal Nature.

2. TECHNOLOGY: 'Steel City' gets a recharge from the energy tech sector

PITTSBURGH -- The next big hurdle to bringing renewable energy into the U.S. energy mainstream is being scaled in a nondescript warehouse in this city's gritty Lawrenceville neighborhood, just up the Allegheny River from downtown's high-rise monuments to the bygone era of steel. That's where technology startup Aquion Energy Inc. is preparing to launch production of a new sodium-ion hybrid battery that the company's founders believe will be a game-changer for renewable and off-grid energy resources like solar and wind power.

TODAY'S STORIES

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- 4. COAL: DOE continues research for cleaner-burning plants
- 5. AVIATION: Senate prepares for takeoff in fight against E.U. emissions trading plan
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- 12. AGRICULTURE: Climate change may improve harvests in parts of India

E&ETV's OnPoint

13. WATER POLICY: Reclamation chief Connor discusses impact of regulations on hydropower expansion

EnergyWire -- Thu., June 7, 2012 -- Read the full edition

1. HYDRAULIC FRACTURING: Wyo. regulator apologizes for 'inconsiderate remarks'

Wyoming's top oil and gas official, Tom Doll, apologized yesterday, hours after the state's governor repudiated Doll's assertion that a group of Wyoming residents pressing water pollution complaints are motivated by "greed."

2. COAL: A cautionary tale for U.S. energy policy unfolds in the Land Down Under

Coal and iron ore have transformed Australia into a regional powerhouse, propelling a 51 percent economic expansion over the past two years alone and spearheading an expected further gusher of export wealth from liquefied natural gas. Yet the remarkable boom has come at a price: Australia's dollar has surged 69 percent in value in the past decade, cutting into tourism and eroding the competitiveness of its manufactured products. Its manufacturing base has shrunk by almost 100,000 jobs over the past four years, according to government figures. As the boom has built, Australians have gone deeply into debt -- last year, they owed an average of 156 percent of their disposable household income, more than triple their 49 percent debt load in 1991. It's a dilemma that could be replicated in the United States.

THIS MORNING'S STORIES

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- 4. NORTH CAROLINA: Senate passes fracking bill as USGS counts limited resources
- 5. LNG: Exports should serve to entice trade policy -- study
- 6. HYDRAULIC FRACTURING: Shortages loom for fracking ingredient, sending profit margins down
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